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GRAVE QUESTIONS!

Hon. William McDougal

(Or, what was found in a Tomb of our ancestors, in a Scandinavian Forest, in 1873. Professor Worsaae, the learned Antiquarian, directed the excavations for two days. On the third, during his absence, the gentleman, who owned the Forest, called in Denmark *Godseier*; a Doctor, who could distinguish bones; and the Stranger, for whose gratification (!) chiefly, the Barrow or Tomb was opened, found the blade of a *Knife*, and an ornamented *Pin*, of *Bronze*, — both beautiful in form, and highly finished. Whence came they? Did our savage forefathers, whose rude implements of Flint — hammers, axes, chisels, and knives, with some Amber beads and broken vessels of burnt clay, — were mingled with their dust, fabricate them? Professor Worsaae in the next edition of his »Nordiske Oldsager», will tell us.

This Tomb, covered with five massive granite boulders, had, evidently, never been disturbed, and was supposed to be at least 2000 years old.)

Stay, Digger! hold thy hand:
Something, not *bone*, nor *flint*,
Is there, amid the sand, —
It had a greenish glint.

Where's Worsaae? we have found,
At last, the proof he wants,
That those who built this Mound
Lived in an age of *Bronze*.

Nay more, — here's proof of skill,
And taste — a shapely *knife*:
Not made to stab or kill,
But for domestic life.

Observe its even blade —
Its curved and rounded point;
How well the end is made
To fit the handle's joint.

And here's a gorgeous ***Pin*** —
At least 't was gorgeous once,
When Kings were decked with tin,
And copper, now called bronze.

Its head is round and flat,
With ornamented face;
And outward bent, so that,
All may admire its grace.

»May be,» — the Doctor mused —
»But still, I am not clear,
For what that pin was used
By those who placed it here.»

»Perhaps,» the Stranger said,
»Some chieftan's lady, fair,
With this adorned her head,
And pinned her ***Chignon*** there!»

»Nay, Nay,» rejoined ***Godseier***,
»In that rude age of Stone, a
Bronze ***Haarnaal*** was too dear,
For ***Frøken*** or for ***Kone****.

Only some warrior, bold,
Could win, by valiant deeds,
In those brave days of old,
Bronze pins, or Amber beads.»

* ***Haarnaal***, hair-pin; ***Frøken***, young lady; ***Kone***, wife

The Stranger, doubting, »thought
The beads had graced the necks,
— As antiquarians taught —
Of the non-fighting sex.»

»But here are only bones,»
The ungallant Doctor said,
»Of men, — these massive stones,
Enshrined no female dead.»

»Explain then, if you can,
How came these earthen jars
To be entombed with man? —
They served not in his wars?

These pots and pans, in life,
Belonged to »Woman's sphere»,
Do they not prove a *wife*,
Was also buried here?»

The Doctor, somewhat posed,
Replied in gentler tones; —
»Perhaps these jars enclosed,
Incinerated bones!»

And so, the doubt remained;
We knew the bones were human —
Not if that Tomb contained
The Trinkets of a Woman!

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